

Mrs. MYRICK. Mr. Speaker, reserving the right to object, this past July, the United States Congress and our entire nation were gripped by a terrible tragedy, the deaths of the Capitol Police Officers Jacob Chestnut and John Gibson. Officers Chestnut and Gibson gave their lives defending the United States Capitol, all of us who work in this complex and the American people who visit it to see their democracy in action. They died heroically while defending our democracy.

The outpouring of affection and gratitude for these two men was as deep and genuine as any I have witnessed, and I am certain that the many tributes to them served as a comfort to their families.

□ 1800

Of course, no words or tributes can replace their loss. In the aftermath of this tragedy and the heartfelt sympathy of the American people, we in this body were briefly changed. We came together as one family to pay our respects, to reflect on the almost surreal tragedy of that July afternoon and, for a time, respect, civility and comity ruled the day.

In fact Pastor Marcom, in delivering Officer Chestnut's eulogy, remarked on the change that tragedy had on our relations with one another, and he speculated that probably the next week it would be business as usual. In the weeks and months since this time, I have thought long and hard about what we all experienced. I am convinced that what we admired about Officer Gibson and Officer Chestnut and what made them heroes is not the way they died but the way in which they lived.

Officers Chestnut and Gibson were honest, genuine, hard-working family men who loved their jobs and loved their country. In an age where too many people seem consumed by life's most superficial pleasures, they showed us that America is populated by common men of the most substantial and admirable character.

Of course, the great tragedy is that it took their deaths for us to recognize what heroes they had been all along.

Mr. Speaker, there is a lesson here. We would do well to learn it. While we too often argue, bicker and consume ourselves with political maneuvering and intrigue, the Nation cries out for real leadership, not in words but in deeds. These complicated times demand a Congress dedicated to integrity, good works and behavior that reflects admirably, not just on ourselves but on our sacred rights and responsibilities as constitutional officers. But that is too rarely the case.

Simply put, Mr. Speaker, we are too much like a caricature of ourselves and too little like Officers Jacob Chestnut and John Gibson. We are too much like adversaries and too little like we were in the days after the gun fire erupted in the Capitol.

This resolution asks that we honor those officers by living our lives and

performing our duties with the same dignity, love and respect with which these men lived their lives and performed their duties.

This resolution asks us to honor them by honoring the people they protected and the people we represent, by living up to a standard of service and behavior that we can be proud of, as much as we were proud of the service of these two men. This resolution asks us to exemplify what is best in America, to lead rather than follow. If one thinks about it, it is really not much to ask, and it is long, long overdue.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the honorable gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS), my friend, for his assistance with this resolution, as well as the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY), the honorable majority whip, for his continued courage in the aftermath of a tragedy that struck him so close to home.

Mr. Speaker, in drafting this resolution, we consulted the United States Capitol Police and the Chestnut and Gibson families, who believe it to be appropriate and fitting.

Mr. Speaker, I withdraw my reservation of objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FOSSELLA). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Ohio?

There was no objection.

The Clerk read the concurrent resolution, as follows:

Whereas Jacob Chestnut and John Gibson of the United States Capitol Police laid down their lives for their country and all of us;

Whereas beyond the devotion of Jacob Chestnut and John Gibson to duty, honor, and country was their commitment to respect;

Whereas Jacob Chestnut and John Gibson were simple, humble, private men who deeply moved this nation simply by doing their jobs;

Whereas the focus on their exemplary personal character could not have come at a time of greater need as many in our country seem more and more dedicated to self-indulgence; and

Whereas the Members of Congress have an unparalleled opportunity to be urgently needed role models of respect and dignity with no loss of personal principles: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring). That Members of Congress should follow the example of Jacob Chestnut and John Gibson by living lives of love, respect, and integrity every day at all times, including on the floor of the Senate and House of Representatives, and should deserve the title "Honorable" by setting an example so that Jacob Chestnut and John Gibson did not die in vain.

The concurrent resolution was agreed to. A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION WAIVING REQUIREMENT OF CLAUSE 4(b) OF RULE XI WITH RESPECT TO SAME DAY CONSIDERATION OF CERTAIN RESOLUTIONS REPORTED FROM COMMITTEE ON RULES

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington (during consideration of conference report

on H.R. 6) submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 105-754) on the resolution (H. Res. 558) waiving a requirement of clause 4(b) of rule XI with respect to consideration of certain resolutions reported from the Committee on Rules, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 6, HIGHER EDUCATION AMENDMENTS OF 1998

Mr. GOODLING. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to the order of the House of Friday, September 25, 1998, I call up the conference report on the bill (H.R. 6) to extend the authorization of programs under the Higher Education Act of 1965, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of Friday, September 25, 1998, the conference report is considered as having been read.

(For conference report and statement, see proceedings of the House of Friday, September 25, 1998, at page H8978).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GOODLING) and the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY), each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GOODLING).

Mr. GOODLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in support of the conference report on H.R. 6, the Higher Education Amendments of 1998. I want to express my sincere appreciation to the members of the conference committee for the efforts they put forth in resolving the differences between the House and the Senate bill. This has truly been a bipartisan, bicameral effort.

Particularly I want to thank the gentleman from California (Mr. MCKEON) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KILDEE) for their efforts in putting this legislation together and for their determination in finding a solution to the 1998 interest rate problem.

Without their efforts, millions of students could not begin this academic year with the student loans they need to pay for college. Also I want to thank the ranking member of the committee the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY) for his efforts in resolving this issue and many others that arose throughout the process.

I especially want to thank the Speaker of House, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGRICH), the majority leader, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARMEY), and chairman of the Committee on the Budget, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KASICH). Without their help, this interest rate solution would not have been possible. All three contributed to ensuring that we could pay for this provision, which is now budget neutral, without passing any of the costs on to students.

Considering H.R. 6, we will complete a process that began in subcommittee

of the gentleman from California (Mr. McKEON) 2 years ago. The Higher Education Act currently provides more than \$40 billion per year in student financial assistance.

The legislation will benefit millions of students across the country in the pursuit of a higher education. This bill will improve programs such as Work-Study, Pell Grants, TRIO and, of course, student loans that help millions of students pay for college.

This legislation will do a number of important things. However, none may be as important as our efforts to keep student loans available for all students. As all of my colleagues know, we have been struggling for the past year and a half with the student loan interest rate issue that is the direct result of the Student Loan Reform Act of 1993. As a parent, I am keenly aware of the burden being placed on our youth by student loan debt.

I am personally committed to ensuring that our students entering college this fall have student loans, Pell grants and campus-based aid available to them to help offset the rising college costs facing this country today, very important.

I am especially pleased that the interest rate fix contained in H.R. 6 will ensure uninterrupted access to private capital for our Nation's students while at the same time provide today's borrowers with the lowest student loan interest rate in 17 years. Students, college leaders and bankers have all praised the compromise on interest rates included in the House and Senate bills. Major student groups have described this proposal as, and I quote, a realistic, fair and evenhanded compromise that protects students' needs for lower borrowing rates.

The American Council on Education and 10 other major higher education groups representing over 3600 colleges and universities praised the fact that the proposal ensures the continued availability of capital in the guaranteed student loan program.

As far as college costs are concerned, I would like to note that H.R. 6 will implement a number of the recommendations of the Commission on the Cost of Higher Education. Those who run institutions of higher education have to understand, we do not put more money into loans and grants so that they can raise their tuition rates. They have to tighten their belt just as businesses have to all over the country in order to make sure that college education is affordable.

H.R. 6 takes needed steps in that direction by ensuring parents and students that they have access to information on the price and the price increases at America's colleges and universities as well as information on the factors which are driving tuition increases.

I would like to single out one specific cost-saving provision which permits colleges to offer their faculty age-based voluntary retirement incentives.

Championed by my good friend, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. FAWELL), the retiring chairman of the Subcommittee on Employer-Employee Relations, this initiative will likely be Mr. FAWELL's last to become law in his distinguished 14-year career in the U.S. House of Representatives.

The provision will help both colleges and older faculty by allowing the institution to offer additional benefits to professors as an incentive to voluntarily retire.

As far as campus crime is concerned, we are fulfilling our promise to stress safety on our college campuses and have numerous issues in this legislation in order to make college campuses safer and make sure parents and students understand the problems on college campuses.

Teacher training is near and dear to me. It focuses on improving teacher quality. It will not matter whether our pupil-teacher ratio is one to one or one to 10, if there is not a well-trained teacher in the classroom, that will not make any difference.

The only difference it makes is that there are not 30 in there who may be under the influence of an unqualified teacher.

Under this legislation, States will be encouraged to undertake a wide variety of efforts to improve the quality and ability of classroom teachers. We also have to get those quality classroom teachers where they are most needed. I would like to thank the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KILDEE) for working together to create an initiative under this legislation that provides loan forgiveness for teachers who agree to teach in high-poverty, urban or rural schools.

The literacy provision is important. This provision will encourage students to become involved in their communities, help children learn to read by ensuring that colleges use more of their work-study dollars to fund these initiatives.

I want to take a moment to thank the hard-working staff of the Committee on Education and the Workforce who shepherded this bill through many long days of negotiation and changes. In particular, Sally Stroup was very helpful to me in balancing the many interests that are represented in this bill. She, along with Pam Davidson, should be proud of our accomplishments today. George Conant was our point person on the National Commission on the Cost of Higher Education, whose report resulted in putting college cost accountability into high education for the first time in American history. Parents will be much better informed of how and why tuitions are rising.

Vic Klatt was our orchestra leader on the bill, pulling together the strings, the brass, the percussion and certainly the wind section, there was a lot of that, so we all sounded well tuned and

harmonious. Jo-Marie St. Martin, with the help of Linda Stevens, actually got this 800-page bill through the legislative process so that today we can send this bill to the Senate and then to the President for his signature.

And Marshall Grigsby, Mark Zuckerman, Karen Weiss, Callie Cauffman, D'Arcy Philips and Sally Lovejoy for all the work they put into bringing this day to fruition.

Let me just say that the legislation before us today is truly one of the most important things that we in the 105th Congress will do this year. I hope the press will spend some time writing about it instead of everything else that they write about.

It will ensure that every American has access to a quality postsecondary education at an affordable price. This is a bipartisan bill that makes much needed reform to help students, parents and schools. I urge my colleagues to support the conference agreement.

Vote yes on the conference report.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 2 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to support H.R. 6, the Higher Education Amendments of 1998. It represents a significant step forward in increasing our Federal investment in higher education.

Both the House and Senate have worked for over over a year to fashion legislation that I believe strengthens our country's commitment to higher education. When this bill is enacted, it will make a college education more affordable by significantly reducing student loan interest rates, by increasing Pell grant award levels, and improving the calculation of benefits for independent and dependent students.

The bill adopts a number of measures that enhance support for minority and disadvantaged students by strengthening the TRIO program and other programs supporting historically black colleges and universities, Hispanic serving institutions, tribally controlled colleges, and institutions serving significant numbers of native Alaskan and Hawaiian students.

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This bill includes the High Hopes Program of President Clinton and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. FATTAH). This new program will greatly enhance the opportunity for low-income middle-school-aged students to dream of a college education.

The bill also creates a major new effort to recruit and train teachers for our Nation's public schools. The new grant program provides for partnerships between States, institutions of higher education and local school districts, designed to increase the number of certified teachers available and to improve upon how those teachers are trained. Also included in that initiative is a loan forgiveness provision designed to attract the best and brightest to our classrooms.

This bill will also allow the Department of Education to strengthen and improve the way it administers all of the student financial aid.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly encourage my colleagues to vote "yes" on the conference report on the Higher Education Amendments of 1998.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GOODLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield 6 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. McKEON), the subcommittee chairman who worked long and hard to bring this legislation to the floor.

Mr. McKEON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for yielding me this time, and I rise in strong support of the conference report to H.R. 6, the Higher Education Amendments of 1998.

It is hard to believe that it has been almost 2 years since the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. DALE KILDEE), the ranking member on my subcommittee, and I sat down to begin the reauthorization process. At that meeting we agreed that we would work together to develop legislation that would make college more affordable, simplify the student aid system, and stress academic quality. By adopting this conference report, we will accomplish those goals.

This legislation would not be possible without the remarkable bipartisan, bicameral spirit of this conference committee. I am sure that some are surprised that this Congress, in this political environment, would be able to produce a conference report of this magnitude.

I would first like to thank the chairman of the Committee on Education and the Workforce, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BILL GOODLING), for his support and leadership on this important legislation. Additionally, the full committee ranking member, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. BILL CLAY), along with all members of the conference committee, including the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. TOM PETRI), the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. LINDSEY GRAHAM), the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. MARK SOUDER), the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. JOHN PETERSON), the gentleman from Florida (Mr. CLAY SHAW), the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. DAVE CAMP), the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. JIM TALENT), the gentleman from California (Mr. MARTY MARTINEZ), the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. ROB ANDREWS) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. SANDER LEVIN) and their staffs deserve a great deal of thanks for their hard work and dedication.

I also want to thank the gentleman from Texas (Mr. RUBEN HINOJOSA) and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. CHAKA FATTAH) for their hard work and amendments that they worked on, that I did not always agree with, but I appreciate the effort they put forth and the great work that they did.

And the members of the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources,

including ranking member TED KENNEDY, DAN COATS and CHRISTOPHER DODD, should be recognized for their commitment to getting this conference completed. And in particular JIM JEFFORDS, the chairman, because he was always willing to work directly with me in putting this conference report together.

I would like to stress how thankful I am for the commitment of the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KILDEE) to this legislation. Whenever a problem would arise, we would simply call the other in order to work out a solution.

This legislation is one of the most significant things this Congress will do for students and their families this year. It will bring us closer to my goal of ensuring that every American who wants a quality education at an affordable price will be able to get it.

As many of my colleagues know, one of the biggest challenges we faced during this reauthorization process was saving the student loan program. The scheduled change in the interest rate jeopardized access to private capital for students. After working extensively with all parties involved, the student groups, the higher education and lending communities, and Republican and Democrat Members of Congress, we found a solution that keeps student loans available for all students and provides current students with the lowest rates in 17 years.

Further, more Americans will be able to afford college through meaningful changes to the financial need analysis formula. These changes focus more resources towards the students with the greatest need and provide students with greater incentives to work and save for college.

The legislation before us will simplify the student aid system by bringing it into the next century. It will create a performance-based organization within the Department of Education that is focused on providing quality service to students and parents. For the first time, the department student financial aid systems will be run like a business, adopting the best practices from the private sector and focusing on bottom line results. Parents and students deserve a modern student aid system that meets their needs. This legislation will give the Secretary the tools he needs to provide it.

Additionally, H.R. 6 revises the guaranty agency system by changing the financing structure to give these entities the flexibility they need in order to use the latest private sector business practices, operate more efficiently, ensure program integrity and, most importantly, provide real savings to the Federal Government.

Furthermore, H.R. 6 contains provisions that implement a number of recommendations of the National Commission on the Cost of Higher Education. One of these provisions requires the Secretary to make available all information on each school's tuition, price and price increases. As a result,

students and parents will be able to make more informed choices about the schools they choose, and colleges will be held more accountable for cost increases.

It is important to note that this legislation is paid for. I want to personally thank the Speaker, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGRICH), and the chairman of the Committee on the Budget, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KASICH), as well as the majority leader, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARMEY), and David Hobbs from the staff of the gentleman from Texas, for their hard work and support in making this solution possible.

In conclusion, I want to take a moment to recognize the outstanding staff members who have made this legislation a reality: George Conant, Pam Davidson, Vic Klatt, Sally Lovejoy, D'Arcy Philips, Jeff Andrade, Steve Cope, Margot Schenet, and from my personal staff, Karen Weiss and Bob Cochran. But the one person who deserves the most thanks is Sally Stroup, because without her leadership and expertise, we would not be here today.

With Washington divided on partisan lines on so many issues, it is remarkable to bring together congressional Republicans, Democrats, student groups, educators and the financial community to gain consensus on this higher education bill. The bipartisan support for H.R. 6 was evident when the House originally passed the bill on a 414 to 4 vote; then when the Senate passed it 96 to 1.

We can complete the legislative process today by adopting this conference report and sending it down to the President. So I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on the Higher Education Amendments of 1998.

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HINOJOSA).

(Mr. HINOJOSA asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HINOJOSA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my strong support for H.R. 6, the Higher Education Amendments of 1998 conference report.

As a member of the House Committee on Education and the Workforce, and Chair of the Education Task Force of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, I can say without reservation that this is one of the single most important pieces of legislation Congress will vote on for students and families this year.

Simply put, H.R. 6 will go a long way towards strengthening higher education for the next century. This bill will expand postsecondary education opportunities for low-income individuals and increase the affordability of postsecondary education for middle income families.

Included in the reauthorization conference report are provisions of my own bill, H.R. 2495, the Higher Education for the 21st Century Act. One of the reasons I came to Congress was to effect the very type change this bill will

accomplish for a deserving segment of the population that has been overlooked for far too long.

I am proud to say that through the combined efforts of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GOODLING), the ranking member, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. BILL CLAY), Secretary of Education Dick Riley, the gentleman from California (Mr. BUCK MCKEON), and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. DALE KILDEE), the bill we have before us today will create a new and separate title for Hispanic-serving institutions, well over 100 colleges and universities across the country with an undergraduate enrollment at least 25 percent Hispanic.

It will increase the authorization level for HSIs to \$62.5 million, funds that can be used for construction of new classrooms, laboratories, libraries, the purchase of books and periodicals, technological improvements and, most importantly, improving and expanding graduate and professional opportunities for Hispanic students. And, yes, H.R. 6 will also improve teacher quality, preparation and improvement.

Mr. Speaker, I ask for the support of all my colleagues to pass the bill on behalf of every American who wants to pursue a higher education.

Mr. GOODLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Mrs. ROUKEMA), an important member of the committee who is always helping us with education issues.

(Mrs. ROUKEMA asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. ROUKEMA. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for yielding me this time, and I must say, with others who have already spoken, that this is one of the most significant bills that we will be passing in this Congress, without a doubt. I must say so because these are the issues that count with the American people.

To be competitive in the global economy, we need to provide our country's youth with the means to a better education. It is the essence of the American dream. And that is what we are looking at here today. This is the legislation that will enable young people across the Nation to have the skills and the good jobs at good wages that they need.

I might say this has always been, as the chairman has said, one of my favorite subjects on the Committee on Education and the Workforce. And there have been lots and lots of good things said about this, but I want to stress at least two issues that I have particularly focused on in this, and that is the student loan interest rate issue. It at first was controversial, but we were able to work it out. And I believe that we worked it out and resolved the potential crisis of the loan interest rate issue very, very well. We are helping students while they can save the cost of higher education.

I am speaking here wearing really two hats, as a member of this committee and also as the chairwoman of the Subcommittee on Financial Institutions and Consumer Credit of the Committee on Banking and Financial Services, so I know the issue from both sides of the coin. And this legislative fix is necessary to ensure the banks do not leave the market, and yet at the same time provide the students with a lower interest rate than would have been necessary before.

I also want to point out, as a continuum of our reforms on scam schools, that we are now including the Pell Grant program in the reforms. So that those students who receive Pell Grants will not be taken in by scam schools and, at the same time, the money will go back into the revolving fund so that it will help more students get the access to the schools that they need.

I must also make the point that there are child care provisions here which many of us worked on, and I think they are all good, particularly for those who have young children and want to go back and complete their education.

In conclusion, I must say that these are the issues that count with the American people. Let us pass this conference report and continue keeping education as the essence and put these young people on the road to the American dream.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the Higher Education Conference Report that we have before us today.

This bill is one of the most significant bills we will complete this Congress, and we are doing this with bipartisan support! These are the issues that count for the American people.

To be competitive in the global economy, we need to provide our country's youth with the means to better their education. This is the essence of the American dream.

Mr. Speaker, this is the legislation that will enable young people across this nation to obtain the education they need to develop their skills so that they may get the good job at good wages. In this exchange, our students get the job, they want the roof over their head and America gets hard-working, productive members of our society.

Among the many important provisions of this bill, are that this bill assures that the student loan program will be available for all families who need loans, encourages the provision of campus-based child care, cuts down on scam schools and works on the training of our teachers.

It is a good bill that makes sense for today's students!

STUDENT LOAN INTEREST RATE ISSUE

With this bill, I believe we have resolve the potential crisis of the federal student loan interest rate issue. The proposal in this legislation will help save access to higher education, while helping students save on the cost of higher education.

I am speaking today wearing two hats. One—as a longtime Member of the Postsecondary Education Subcommittee. The other hat—I serve as Chairman of the House Subcommittee on Financial Institutions of the House Banking Committee.

So I know this program from both sides—so to speak.

This legislative “fix” is necessary to ensure the banks do not leave the market, and to provide students with a lower interest rate.

Pell Grant Reform

Clearly, one of the biggest problems facing students today is the cost of higher education. While we must do everything we can to put higher education within reach of every student, we also must do everything we can to ensure to protect our scarce resources—to ensure that they are not misused or wasted or squandered.

With this in mind I (along with Representative BART GORDON of Tennessee) introduced a provision that is now a part of this Higher Education Act package which prevents a post-secondary school from participating in the Pell Grant program if that school is already ineligible to participate in the federally guaranteed student loan program because of high default rates—these are the SCAM schools—

This will recover millions of dollars currently being squandered and instead put that money to work with hard-working students at legitimate schools!

Child Care

This conference report includes an amendment I offered at Committee to help society with today's child care problems. This problem is especially great for men and women who want to further their education to make a better life for them and their family. This is near impossible to achieve when reliable, quality child care is not available.

We need to help students solve the child care problem. And we need to give institutions the means to put their proposals to the test. This bill helps us do that!

Conclusion

For all of these reasons, and many others that I do not have time to discuss today, this legislation is critical to all students.

Let's pass this conference report, and continue education as the road to the American dream!

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KILDEE).

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

This conference report on H.R. 6, the higher education bill, is the culmination of almost 2 years of bipartisan work on behalf of students and parents across this country. When we first started this process at the beginning of last year, the gentleman from California (Mr. MCKEON) and I set out to produce a bill that would enjoy widespread support. We decided to meet at least once a month for breakfast, without staff. And although this made our staffs very nervous, our breakfast meetings helped smooth out the rough spots and kept us moving with a truly bipartisan spirit. The gentleman from California (Mr. MCKEON) is truly an outstanding lawmaker. In light of our understanding that this bill was too important to be bogged down in bipartisan differences, we both had to give ground and to compromise.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud of this bill and I am especially grateful for the

hard work of all our staffs in getting us to this day. On the Republican side I want to acknowledge the excellent work of Bob Cochran and Karen Weiss of the personal staff of the gentleman from California; and Vic Klatt, George Conant, Pam Davidson, Sally Lovejoy, D'Arcy Philps, Lynn Selmser, and David Frank of the committee staff.

And I want to offer my special to Sally Stroup, who put her heart and soul into this effort. Her expertise and thoughtfulness were essential to making this process work.

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On the Democratic side, I want to thank Callie Coffman of my staff and Chris Mansour of my personal staff, and Mark Zuckerman, Marshall Grigsby, Peter Rutledge, Alex Nock and Gail Weiss of the committee staff.

Finally, I would like to thank my former staff member and dear friend, David Evans. The contributions he has made to the formulation of this bill deserve our collective gratitude.

I would be remiss in not thanking the fine people of the Congressional Research Service, Jim Steadman, Margot Schenet, and Barbara Miles. Steve Cope in the Legislative Counsel's Office and Deb Kalcevic at the Congressional Budget Office did exceptionally fine work.

For the millions who must borrow to help pay for college, we have sought to keep the cost of borrowing down. Under this bill, students will have the lowest interest rates in over 17 years. They will also be allowed to refinance their student loans at a lower interest rate. And next year the authorization level for the maximum Pell Grant will be \$4,500, showing our concern that students have a heavy burden of debt.

We have created a new campus-based child care program to assist low-income parents in school, increased income protection for both dependent and independent students, and expanded the savings protection allowances. We strengthen the TRIO programs. We expand college work-study. We simplify the Perkins Loan program. We revamp the State incentive grant program. And we establish a new gear-up program to help young people complete a high school education and go on to college.

Because of this bill, an individual who enters teaching, remains in the profession, and teaches in a poverty high school could have a significant portion of their student loans forgiven.

I am particularly pleased that this bill strengthens programs to support tribal, Hispanic-serving, and historically black colleges and universities.

Most important, this bill is a reaffirmation that we in Congress remain deeply committed in a bipartisan way to expanding educational opportunities for all Americans.

Mr. GOODLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PETERSON), another member of the committee for yielding time to me.

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman.

I would like to announce that we have no gridlock in Washington on the Committee on Education and the Workforce. I think we have a committee that is very productive and I am very pleased as a freshman to be a part of it. I was very pleased and I want to thank the chairman for the chance that he gave me to serve on my first conference committee in Congress. I will always be grateful.

I want to congratulate the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GOODLING), the chairman, and the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY), the ranking member, for their leadership, and the gentleman from California (Mr. MCKEON) the subcommittee chairman, and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KILDEE) for their leadership and their breakfast sessions. That is my favorite meal, so next year invite me.

Also, I think we owe a great debt of gratitude to the staff. We may have argued now and then, but they do good work and I want to commend them here publicly.

This act will ensure that college will be more affordable, with the lowest interest rates in 17 years. It will simplify the student aid system by using the same application no matter which program. It will improve academic quality, campus safety, and provide greater access to all aspects of higher education.

Last week, we debated a bill that I struggled with. I do not often struggle, but I struggled with where we allowed more immigrants, high skilled workers, to be allowed to come into this country. That was a bill that companies begged for because they did not have the ability to expand and grow. The high tech, fastest growing companies in this country were struggling to hire those high tech workers that were needed, so we had to increase the immigrant pool.

I view this as a partial indictment on our higher education community. But we in this bill have focused on this, and high skilled, technically trained workers are on a more even ground than they were before. In this country we need a combination of academic and technology. Through much blood-letting and compromising, H.R. 6 provides the opportunity for our Nation's youth to pursue their education, whether it is academic, technical, or a combination thereof.

Also, the conference report adopts the House admonition to the department that higher education consists of not only traditional but also nontraditional opportunities, an incentive provision calling for proprietary school liaisons, and several provisions ensuring against fraud and abuse.

An issue that has not been mentioned here tonight is a provision to fight drugs. I do not think there is any cause, in my view, that is more worthy than to help protect our young people in basic and higher education against

drugs. This has a provision, if they are caught in possession or in selling, 1 year, they are out for a year; second offense, 2 years; third time, indefinitely. That is a lot tougher than the National Football League, because one of those players could be arrested today and they will be playing next Sunday.

It also provides incentives for distance learning, the wave of the future. It gives the Secretary of Education the authority to waive certain Federal restrictions that prevent students from receiving financial aid for some types of distance education programs. It also gives the Secretary the authority to promote and study distance learning techniques that will expand student access to higher education. In my view, the higher education community in this country is way behind the technology curve in delivering educational opportunities through distance learning.

It also will help those who serve our country. It exempts veterans' benefits from being counted against students when they apply for student loan subsidies. Previously, students receiving benefits under the Montgomery bill would have had their aid reduced.

I urge all my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. ANDREWS).

(Mr. ANDREWS asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ANDREWS. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY) for yielding.

I rise in strong support of this bill and urge its passage. Let me thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GOODLING), the gentleman from California (Mr. MCKEON), the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY), and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KILDEE) for their leadership in this effort, for the staffs of the committee and the Members. And let me especially thank Audrey Williams and Edgar Ho from my office, who worked so very hard on this bill in making it a reality.

I am especially pleased that among the provisions that I offered, the committee has seen fit to include four provisions which I think are very important:

First, every student in America will know of their right to have an income-contingent loan, that is, to pay back their loan as a function of their income; so that, as their income rises, so will their payment, and if their income falls, so will their payment.

Second, a student who cannot receive a loan from a private lender has his or her right reaffirmed as a lender of last resort to go to either a guaranty agency or the direct loan program or both, and I think that is very important.

Third, I appreciate the fact that we have once again restored the incentive for private career schools, some of our very best job trainers, to train those who most need help in job training to move from welfare to work.

Finally, I appreciate the fact that the committee has included very visionary legislation which permits colleges and universities to offer voluntary early retirement packages to professors throughout the country. This will save a significant amount of money for the higher education system. It will open up faculty slots for young professors, particularly young women and minority professors, and I believe it will inject new blood onto our campuses where it is needed most.

I urge the passage of the bill. I look forward to the day when the President signs this bill, because I believe with that signature he will be widening even further the doors of educational opportunity for people throughout this country.

I urge the passage of the bill.

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. ROEMER).

(Mr. ROEMER asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ROEMER. Mr. Speaker, I join in the accolades toward the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GOODLING), the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY), and the gentleman from California (Mr. MCKEON) for their hard work and their coming together to put together one of the most important bills that this body will vote on.

I also want to thank on my staff Gina Mahoney, who has done such hard work, and somebody who left our staff who the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KILDEE) recognized, David Evans, for his hard work as well.

Father Hesberg, who has been noted as a leader in America on education, religious and civil rights issues, once said, "As education goes, so goes America."

Well, my colleagues, this bill puts education in the forefront and will help America get better and better. It does a number of things. It puts higher emphasis on academic quality. It emphasizes new ideas. It encourages regulatory simplification.

I am proud of this legislation to support students across the United States in the best higher education system in the entire world. There are some 3,000 post-secondary institutions in this country consistently turning out some of the best scientists, some of the best lawyers, some of the best teachers, some of the best researchers and doctors in the entire world, and this will continue to make our higher education system the best, second to none, in the world.

This bill reflects a number of priorities: The lowest interest rates since 1981 for our students, a revamped teacher training program which includes my alternative route certification bill, more choices for students when consolidating their loans, permits universities to offer early retirement packages to their faculty, provides regulatory relief to the nine colleges and universities in my district.

I encourage bipartisan support for this bill to pass smoothly and swiftly through the United States Congress.

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY).

(Ms. WOOLSEY asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I too am a proud member of the Subcommittee on Postsecondary Education, Training and Life-Long Learning, which crafted this reauthorization. And I can assure my colleagues that the Higher Education Amendments of 1998 make higher education more affordable for all students.

The amendments also make education safer, particularly for women, because we have included grants to combat violent crimes against women on campuses. Mr. Speaker, 20 percent of college women will be victims of sexual assault at some time during their years on campus. These are our daughters, our sisters, our mothers. They should not have to learn in fear, and this bill invests in their safety.

This conference report also includes a provision on prepaid college tuition plans. These plans let families lock in the cost of tomorrow's college tuition at today's prices. We need to get the word out so that families across the country can benefit from these well-thought-out plans.

I am also pleased that we are supporting teacher training partnerships in this conference report. Partnerships for Professional Renewal, based on a successful program at Sonoma State University in my district, funds partnerships between teachers' training programs and local schools.

I thank the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY), I thank the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KILDEE), I thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GOODLING) and the gentleman from California (Mr. MCKEON), for their bipartisan leadership on this reauthorization. They put the interests of students and families first. We can be proud to vote for the Higher Education Amendments of 1998.

The gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GOODLING) is perfectly correct, this is a good-news day and it should be reported.

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. FATTAH).

(Mr. FATTAH asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FATTAH. Mr. Speaker, let me first thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GOODLING), the chairman and my colleague, and the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY), the ranking member, and all those who labored. Especially the gentleman from California (Mr. MCKEON), Chair of the subcommittee, did a great job on this bill, working with the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KILDEE), and the staff who have already been mentioned, but we all

need to remember their very hard work that will make it possible for tens of millions of American families to be able to improve the life chances of their young people.

This is a moment in which this Congress acts as statesmen more concerned about the next generation than the next election, and it is a moment we all can take pride in.

I would like to refer, obviously, to the High Hopes 21st century initiative which has now been termed Gear-Up in this bill. But beyond the semantics, what it really means is that we are going to reach out to young people in 6th and 7th grade, more than a million of them, each and every year from this point forward in thousands of junior high and middle schools across this country, and let them in on a secret that we have all known for a very long time, and that is that college is available to them if they are willing to work hard enough to get there.

□ 1845

I would like to thank President Clinton for his embrace and support of this initiative. It was made possible because of the bipartisan support here in this House. Many, many of my colleagues, more than 200 of them on both sides of the aisle, have been helpful in moving this initiative forward.

I would like to point out the strong support on the conference committee, which I believe is indicative of the bipartisan support for this bill, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. SOUDER) and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PETERSON) on the Republican side, and the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY), the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KILDEE) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. ANDREWS) really shepherding this particular provision through the conference committee. A conference is simply an opportunity for the House and the Senate to meet and to arrive at a shared consensus about the direction of public policy. I think this conference committee and all that it embodies represents the best of public policy.

This Congress indeed has a lot to be proud of, and I am happy to have played a part in the higher education amendments of 1998.

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Speaker, I yield two minutes to the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MCCARTHY).

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the conference report for H.R. 6. We certainly have heard everyone here, back and forth, saying what a great bill it is, and it is. It has been a pleasure in my freshman year, which is actually two years, but we are freshmen for a long time around here, to share in the work that everybody did.

This is what should be getting through to the American people, that we are doing our work and we do care about certainly our young people out there. I commend everybody that put their hard work in, because we do care

about our children and we care about the future of our children, and it just goes to show that when you work in a bipartisan way, you can get things done.

I am really pleased that H.R. 6 still includes many of the provisions of my bill, the America's Teacher Preparation Improvement Act. We know if we do not teach our teachers to be better teachers, our children are going to suffer. I think that is wonderful having that in there.

I am also pleased that H.R. 6 includes legislation that the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) and I introduced to protect consumers. H.R. 6 requires the Department of Education to put out up-to-date information about financial aid scholarship scams on its web site.

We wish we could have put even more into this particular bill, but, as always, there are restraints. But it represents a major step forward for making college accessible and affordable. I urge my colleagues to support it.

We can make college affordable for every person in this country. That is our job, and we have taken a giant step towards that. I thank everyone so much.

Mr. GOODLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2½ minutes to the gentlewoman from Maryland (Mrs. MORELLA).

(Mrs. MORELLA asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. MORELLA. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in praise of the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Chairman GOODLING), the gentleman from California (Mr. McKEON), the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KILDEE), the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY) and all of the members of the conference committee on H.R. 6 for their hard work and their leadership. They deserve great credit for this thoughtful and carefully crafted bill that will increase access to a higher education for millions of Americans.

For most Americans, student loans are the primary source of education funding. From the GI Bill to Pell Grants and the Stafford Loan Program, financial aid has enabled millions of working class families to send their children to college.

This legislation will provide college students with the lowest interest rates for academic loans in 17 years. It expands the Pell Grant Program and also improves campus based aid programs like Supplemental Education Opportunity Grants. It improves teacher preparation and provides loan forgiveness for teachers who work in areas where the poverty rate is high. They have simplified the process of applying for student loans and there is more access to crime statistics and information to allow them to have an accurate picture of campus safety.

I am particularly pleased that the conference report on H.R. 6 includes

legislation I introduced to expand access to a higher education for low income parents. My legislation, H.R. 3296, the College Access Means Parents in School Act, the CAMPUS Act, will enable more low income women to get a college education by providing campus-based child care centers. The conference report authorizes \$45 million for competitive grants to institutions of higher education for the establishment of child care centers on college campuses serving the needs of low income students.

I do not have to tell you about the benefits of that, that when you motivate these parents and they have high quality child care, they will graduate faster with a higher grade point average. The good news is, as I mentioned, that students who have access to campus-based child care centers are more likely to stay in school and graduate than the average college student. What great preparation this is for them.

Again, I want to commend the conferees, the staff and the leaders of the House Committee on Education and Workforce and the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee for their excellent endeavors on the reauthorization of the higher education bill. I urge all of my colleagues to support this bill.

I would also like to just add a note of congratulations to us for having had the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. FAWELL) with us here in the House of Representatives because of the great leadership he has given to that committee and to all of the other committees, the Committee on Science also on which he serves with me, and the integrity and character he has brought to this House of Representatives.

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Speaker, I yield two minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE).

(Mr. PAYNE asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I would also like to add my congratulations to the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY), the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GOODLING), the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KILDEE), the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MEEHAN) and the members of the conference committee for including many of the provisions in a bill I introduced, H.R. 3311, to improve international education programs in this final version of the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act.

As a member of the Committee on International Relations and the Committee on Education and Workforce, I know that in order to be competitive in this global economy, we must continue to encourage and support programs designed to educate our students in foreign languages, diplomacy and international affairs.

Throughout the years, Title VI of the Higher Education Act has been extremely effective in helping colleges and universities reach that goal. The

inclusion of Technological Innovation and Cooperation for Foreign Information Access Grants in the conference report of the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act enables institutions and libraries to engage in collaborative international education projects utilizing innovative technology. This kind of program is timely as universities and libraries are faced with escalating costs of access to international resources.

This bill also allows the Institute for International Public Policy to expand the current Junior Year Abroad Program to permit summer internship experiences. And to assist in the cooperation of Federal support for the Minority International Affairs Program, this bill creates a seven member inter-agency committee on minority careers in international affairs. I am also pleased that the conferees have chosen to keep the international education program in its own separate title.

Overall, I believe the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act will provide our Nation's students expanded access to a college education. By increasing the authorization of the Pell Grant award to \$4,500, we help students afford the cost of college without having to rely on loans and increase their debt. I only encourage the Committee on Appropriations to meet this authorization level.

The New Teacher Training Program included in this bill will increase the number of teachers who are trained in low income areas.

Mr. Speaker, as I conclude, I would just urge my colleagues to support this bill for final passage.

I only encourage the appropriations committee to meet this authorization level. The new teacher training program included in this bill will increase the number of teachers who are trained in low-income areas.

This extra hand in our overcrowded low income area schools will enable school children to receive more one on one attention in the classroom. And the Gear Up program, based on Representative FATTAH's and President Clinton's High Hopes program, will give students in low income areas the encouragement, the hope and the tools to go on to college. There are some concerns I have regarding the effects of some of the provisions of this bill on proprietary schools.

However, overall this bill contains many valuable programs that will help our inner city and low income youth realize the dream of going to college and the student financial aid programs will help students make that dream a reality. That is why I will support this bill today and encourage my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Speaker, I yield two minutes to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. KIND).

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this legislation. As a freshman member of this body, the United States Congress, I lobbied hard to get on the Committee on Education and the Workforce and the Subcommittee on

Higher Education, and it was exactly for this evening and this purpose, to be able to stand up and proudly support an outstanding piece of bipartisan legislation that really goes to the hopes and dreams of what my life has been about.

Growing up in western Wisconsin as a young student, my hope and dream was to be able to go on to school, go on to college. My father was a telephone repairman with five kids. He was in no position to be able to afford sending myself or any of my brothers or sister on to school. But for the existence of programs that are being reauthorized in this legislation today, the student loan program, the Work Study Program, expansion of the Pell Grant program, I in no way would have had the financial means to go on to school.

Now representing western Wisconsin, a place that has five state universities and seven technical school campuses and a private college, this legislation represents to me the fact that many, many more students growing up in western Wisconsin will now have the financial ability to go on to higher education, which is really the underpinning of the great American dream and that which we cherish so much in this country.

I commend the ranking members, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KILDEE), for the fine work they have done; the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Chairman GOODLING) and the gentleman from California (Chairman MCKEON).

I also want to especially commend the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. FATTAH) for the hard work that he put in for the Gear Up for High Hopes Program, that he worked incredibly hard on, not only in the Committee, but with every member of this body, who he probably spoke to two or three times to get their support.

This truly is an historic night, Mr. Speaker, an opportunity for us to encourage the rest of our colleagues to support what is probably going to be the shining example of the 105th Congress, of how we can bridge the partisan gap and come together and do what we think is in the best interests of this country and the future of our Nation.

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Speaker, I yield two minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL).

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me time.

Mr. Speaker, as a former member of the Committee on Education and Workforce, I rise today to state my strong support for this higher education the amendments conference report. If one goes down the list of all the good things in this bill, increasing Pell Grants, lowering interest rates on student loans, strengthening direct loan and guaranteed loan programs, improving teacher quality, preparation and recruitment, making needs analysis more fair and reasonable, establish-

ing the Gear Up Mentoring Initiative, strengthening TRIO, the historically Black colleges and Hispanic-serving institutions, we know we have a really, really good bill.

I am also thankful that my bill, which requires the Department of Education to directly link its web site to free data bases of accurate information concerning scholarships, fellowships and any other financial aid information, is also included in this conference report.

I introduced this bill with my good friend and colleague, the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MCCARTHY) back in April of 1997. Our provision within the conference report is vital in not only empowering parents and students, but in preventing fraud.

In September of 1996, the Federal Trade Commission began its investigation, Project ScholarScam, into unscrupulous companies that preyed on American families' anxieties about how to finance their children's college tuition.

These scholarship scams guaranteed or promised scholarships and grants in exchange for advance fees. Once these fees were collected, no scholarships or grants were ever provided. Sometimes these companies would ask for a student's checking account to confirm eligibility, then debit the account without the student's consent. American families by the thousands were defrauded and student's hopes were disheartened.

Currently my daughter is a senior in high school and I for one know firsthand the difficulties in meeting the skyrocketing costs of higher education. Our provision is a major step forward in preventing future scholarship scams and is a vital tool in empowering parents to look for creative ways to finance a college education.

I urge my colleagues to vote for H.R. 6, and I commend all the people involved, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY), the gentleman from California (Mr. MCKEON) and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GOODLING).

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Speaker, I yield two minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT).

Mr. SCOTT. Mr. Speaker, I want to commend the conferees for producing a conference report which will serve as a foundation for a stronger system of higher education in this country.

More students will be able to afford a college education due to the lower interest rates on new loans and the increase in Pell Grant levels. We also target middle school students through the new Gear Up Program, which encourages colleges to provide students with information on college opportunities as well as mentoring and tutorial programs so they will be prepared to enter college after high school.

I am also pleased that the conference report retains provisions that I offered during committee deliberations. One will help students with high child care

expenses qualify for student aid, and another provision rewards colleges for effectively collecting overdue loans.

At the same time, I have concerns about provisions in the conference report that may adversely affect Historically Black Colleges and Universities. The conference report only extends the current exemptions that those schools enjoy for one year, whereas the Senate version would have extended it for four years.

There is also a new provision which jeopardizes Pell Grants for students who attend schools with high default rates, many of which have high default rates because of open enrollment practices.

While I support the conference report, I hope the Committee on Education and the Workforce will be able to revisit these issues which are critical to the survival of schools which offer opportunities to those most in need. On balance, however, Mr. Speaker, there is no question that this bill represents a major step forward and should be approved.

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GOODLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to take just a moment to recognize a friend and a colleague on the committee who is retiring from Congress after 14 years of service to his constituents and to the House of Representatives.

□ 1900

I have served with the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. FAWELL) on the Committee on Education and the Workforce since he first came to Congress. In the years that we have worked together, I have known the gentleman to be a committed and tireless member of the committee, a member who could be counted on to fight in the legislative trenches, but who was also able to work in a bipartisan manner to craft legislation to better the lives of working Americans.

From his leadership on health care and pension matters to his efforts to improve productivity, safety and health in the workplace and his overall philosophy that there should be a level playing field between labor and management, the gentleman from Illinois has been at the front lines in all of the major workplace policy debates in Congress.

I know that my colleagues will agree that the gentleman is renowned in the House, among other things, for his expertise in labor, health care and pension law. In committee, the gentleman was also known for taking excellent notes during hearings and markups. Many of my colleagues gained a great deal of their knowledge over the years by picking over his shoulder while he wrote.

Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. FAWELL) has been a valued member of our committee and of the

House as a whole because he always fought for what he thought was right, he never compromised his principles, and he always kept his sense of humor. He always made sure he knew more about the matter at hand than his opponents.

Mr. Speaker, I know I speak for all of my colleagues when I say to HARRIS, we will miss working with you, we will miss the benefit of your knowledge, your energy, your persistence, your attention to detail, and your good humor. It would be difficult, if not impossible, for Congress to do the people's work without the knowledge and commitment of Members like HARRIS FAWELL.

HARRIS, we wish you well in whatever future activities you have planned, and I am certain that you and your family will enjoy life after Congress, and I am told there is life after Congress, although I do not want to find out just yet. It is us who will not enjoy it quite as much because you will not be here.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2½ minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. FAWELL).

Mr. FAWELL. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GOODLING) very much. His friendship and leadership over 14 years, and it does not seem like 14 years, means a great deal to me. I cannot think of anybody who has as much moral authority to speak on educational matters than the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GOODLING) who was a teacher and a principal all of his life. He has stood for quality education, and I hope the gentleman continues to serve on and on here. The gentleman is doing obviously a tremendous job.

My congratulations on what has been accomplished here in regard to having this Higher Education Amendments Act finally passed. So many people put so much time in on it. My comments were meant only to refer to a bipartisan provision in Part D of Title IX that allows age-based voluntary retirement incentives. It was based on a piece of legislation that I had, and I am glad that that is a part of the bill, because I think it makes it a little bit better perhaps, adds more quality in the bill, and it is a quality bill.

I do want to just say "thanks" to all of my colleagues on the committee, and I still think of it as the Committee on Education and Labor. It really is education, labor, pension and health. But that extends also to the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY) on the other side of the aisle. We have differed at times in regard to how we view legislation, but I would never question the commitment and the intent of the good mind of the gentleman from Missouri, and the gentleman from California (Mr. MCKEON), who did so much in shepherding the Higher Education bill.

The other day I was defending Congress and they said, well, there are no longer any Mr. Smiths who come to Washington or Mrs. Smiths, or Ms. Smiths. And I said, oh, yes, there are.

And they said, who? And I was caught right there, and right away the name of the gentleman from California (Mr. MCKEON) came to mind. I said, there is a guy without guile; he works hard, he is an intelligent man, he gives an awful lot, we are lucky to have him.

Mr. Speaker, we are lucky to have an awful lot of Members in this Congress. Ninety-nine and nine-tenths percent of the men and women here are fantastic people, and we are backed up by staff that do so very, very much.

Let me just sneak in one other comment. People think that Washington is kind of a creepy place, at times. Let me tell my colleagues, there are so many awesome good young people who are our staff, and not just on this committee, but elsewhere, that I stand in awe of the young people that I see coming along. I am in my third generation with watching my own generation, watching my children's generation, and now watching my grandchildren, and I report to my colleagues, this country is in good shape, because the young people I see coming along with each generation are just that much better than their predecessors.

So I leave Congress with a lot of good feelings, knowing that the City of Washington is a very fine place to live and to work, and I shall miss you all. By golly, I shall miss you. I may creep back here once in a while to give you some advice, but I thank you for all the tremendous help that so many of you have given to me. I do appreciate it.

Mr. GOODLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield 45 seconds to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PETERSON).

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I quickly would like to share my admiration for the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. FAWELL). I have known him less than 2 years, and he is somebody in Congress that I admire greatly. His district in Congress and the small business community is going to miss him.

The gentleman has a clear, thoughtful voice, a deep understanding of the issues, and the gentleman brings a passion to the debate. The gentleman has the zeal of a freshman and the wisdom of a long-term Member. The gentleman's arguments are very pragmatic and thoughtful, whether it is modernizing archaic labor laws or fighting for affordable health care for small business, and he has a passion for that.

Mr. Speaker, HARRIS FAWELL is the kind of Member I hope to become.

Mr. GOODLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield 45 seconds to the gentleman from California (Mr. MCKEON).

Mr. MCKEON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, I have been here now 6 years and I have been able to serve with the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. FAWELL) for that whole 6 years, and the last 4 years we have served as subcommittee chairmen together. We have a meeting about once a month at 7

o'clock in the morning and the full committee chairman and the subcommittee chairmen all get together, and during that time I have gotten to know the gentleman. I have gotten to know his integrity, his sincerity, his devotion that he brings to the cause, and I have never heard him say one negative thing about another person, on either side of the aisle. I have never heard him say anything disparaging. I just have the greatest respect for this man, and we really are going to miss him.

I talked to him the other day and I said, "I do not know who is going to take your place; I do not know who knows anything like you do about ERISA." And I just want to say, HARRIS, we will really miss you. Thank you for all you have done for the country.

Mr. GOODLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time to merely thank again all of those who made this evening possible. But I want to go a little bit beyond that. Every now and then I hear reports that is a "do-nothing Congress." Well, I want to tell my colleagues a little bit about this committee. It is anything but a do-nothing committee.

Just to tick off a few off the top of my head, we reauthorized IDEA Special Ed; we reauthorized Head Start, it is in conference; we reauthorized Higher Education; we passed Dollars to the Classroom; we passed Bilingual Reform; we passed the Testing Prohibition bill; we passed the Emergency Consolidation Loan Bill and bailed out the Department. We passed the National Committee on College Costs; we passed the Equitable Child Care resolution. We passed the Job Training bill for the 21st century. We authorized Vocational Education for the 21st Century. We passed the Charter School bill; we passed the Reading Excellence bill; we passed the Juvenile Justice bill, and we passed the Child Nutrition bill.

It does not sound like a "do-nothing Congress" to me, at least not a do-nothing committee. Can my colleagues imagine what these staff members have had to do during this entire time because of this tremendous agenda that we put forth from this committee. This is a "do-everything" committee for the benefit of all, and particularly for young people in this country.

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the conference agreement to reauthorize the Higher Education Act. For the last thirty years, the Higher Education Act has enabled countless Americans to pursue their dreams.

One year ago, I held a forum in my district involving students, educators, and administrators to share their concerns and priorities about higher education. I am pleased that many of the issues addressed at that forum have been included in this reauthorization bill.

Some of these provisions include: simplifying and streamlining students loans and providing the lowest interest rate on student loans in 17 years; increasing maximum Pell grant awards to \$4500 next year and up to \$5800

by 2003; continuing to provide long-term low-interest loans to almost 800,000 students with financial need through the Perkins Loan program; readjusting the formula used to analyze financial needs in order to encourage students to work and save for their college education; and providing loan forgiveness for students who teach in low-income areas; and allowing historically black colleges and universities more flexibility in funding and expanding graduate programs through changes made in title III.

I am especially pleased that the Campus-Based Child Care Act, on which I worked with Congresswoman MORELLA and other members, is included in this conference report. This will provide seed money so that colleges and universities may provide quality child care on campus. This is one of the most forward-thinking parts of this Higher Education Act and will allow many low-income single and working parents to attend college when they couldn't before—including many who will be making the transition from welfare to work.

I congratulate the chairman, the committee, and the conferees on coming together to craft this reauthorization. I am happy to support the bill and encourage my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, first, I would like to commend Ranking Member KILDEE and Chairman MCKEON for all of their hard work on making this important legislation bipartisan. This bipartisan conference agreement on the Higher Education Reauthorization Act includes a number of important initiatives to increase access to college, lower the student loan interest rate, and prepare more students for college.

Increasing access to quality higher education must be our nation's number one priority and this legislation helps us accomplish this goal. This legislation increases the maximum Pell Grant award \$3,000 to \$4,500. The Pell Grant is crucial to giving students the financial assistance they need to afford a higher education. The increased award level is important to keep pace with the increasing cost of a college degree.

One of the biggest concerns I hear from students in western Wisconsin, is the growing debt burden they face upon graduation. This legislation will ease that burden and give more students an opportunity receive financial aid assistance, by lowering the student loan interest rate. The bill slashes the interest rate from 8.25 to 7.46 percent, which will save college students hundreds and thousands of dollars over their loan repayment period.

This legislation also expands and creates initiatives designed to encourage students from disadvantaged backgrounds to pursue higher education. The highly successful TRIO outreach project is expanded and a new national effort called GEAR UP has been created to provide support services, mentoring and early intervention counseling to encourage students to strive for and attain an education beyond high school.

I am pleased to support this bipartisan conference agreement, which will provide students in western Wisconsin with increased access, affordability and quality higher education.

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to have the opportunity to vote to help students go to college, and a vote for the conference report on the Higher Education Act Reauthorization is just that—a vote for students.

This bill will lower interest rates on student loans, help disadvantaged middle school students prepare for college, improve preparation and training for teachers, and promote distance-learning through expanded student aid and partnership models that will reach more students. These provisions and others targeted at improving the efficiency and access of student aid programs will help make college affordable for more students, and make attending college a reality for more students.

The bill has merit, but as the ranking Democrat on the Budget Committee I have to express my disappointment that Congress did not find a way to pay for these improvements. Because all costs are not offset according to the Office of Management and Budget, this bill will add to the PAYGO scorecard, expanding the sequester already in the cards for Fiscal Years 2001 and 2002 unless we take additional action before then.

This bill is another example of Congress acting without a guiding budget resolution or plan. This is the first year since the Budget Act became law, a quarter century ago, that Congress has failed to pass a budget resolution conference agreement. The failure of this bill to contain offsets is partly a result of Congress's failure to do its job and pass a budget resolution. We want the benefits of improved public policies, but lack the fiscal discipline to pass a final Congressional Budget Resolution. The American public deserves a Congress that can deliver on our fiscal obligations, and the Republicans in this Congress are shirking that responsibility.

Mrs. KENNELLY of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this conference agreement on the Higher Education Amendments. I support this bill because it further expands the Pell Grant Program, provides the lowest student loan interest rates in nearly two decades, and addresses a new and exciting facet of education, distance learning.

Last year, my colleagues and I worked very hard to increase Pell grant appropriations contained in this year's budget. This trend is continued in this bill, which authorizes significant increases to the largest federal student aid grant program available.

This program is vital to my own state of Connecticut, where 69 percent of all federal student aid to students is in the form of Pell grants. Unfortunately, in the past, funding for this program has not kept pace with the growth of tuition fees. While tuition in Connecticut has risen 110 percent since 1989, federal resources have increased by only 37 percent.

This bill provides desperately needed resources to those who have demonstrated the ability and desire to achieve. It is a victory for those of us fighting to improve our higher education system, and fighting to make the opportunity of going to college a reality for every person in this country who desires to reach for it.

With this bill today we are going to pass a comprehensive higher education program. I urge my colleagues to give the same support to our other important education initiatives, hiring 100,000 new teachers to reduce class size, and providing comprehensive school construction and modernization bonds. If students are to succeed, they must have the resources to meet the challenges of obtaining a quality education today. This bill provides them with that fighting chance.

Mr. KLINK. Mr. Speaker, Chairman GOODLING, and Mr. CLAY, Chairman MCKEON and Mr. KILDEE and the rest of my former colleagues on the committee are to be congratulated for your good work on this legislation.

In the larger scheme of things, H.R. 6 is good for the country and good for our future. Making higher education more accessible to students will make America stronger and more competitive in the global marketplace.

This legislation will increase the maximum Pell grant, provide more funding for work study, increase resources for teacher training and rework the needs formula for student aid to target more money to those students with fewer resources to pay. It also reduces student loan interest to the lowest level in almost 20 years. All these things will increase access to higher education.

I am also pleased that the conference report includes several reforms in student loan management that I have been working on for years, many of which were in my bill, H.R. 2140, the Federal Accountability and Institutional Reform in Education Act (FAIR ED Act).

These common-sense reforms to the student loan program will reduce defaults, bring greater fairness and accessibility to the student loan program, save the Federal Government millions of dollars a year and allow schools to spend more time teaching and less time on education finance.

H.R. 6 will help reduce student loan default rates by cutting the incentive that lenders and guarantors have to let a loan go into default. Currently, the Federal Government not only reimburses these agencies for 98 percent of every defaulted loan, but they also get to keep an additional 27 percent of whatever they collect from defaulted borrowers.

H.R. 6 reduces those percentages to 95 percent and 23 percent, respectively. The bill will ultimately allow for recovery of only 118 percent of a defaulted loan instead of 125 percent. My legislation would have limited reimbursement to 100 percent of any loan, but H.R. 6 is a step in the right direction.

H.R. 6 will also increase communication in the education community in order to reduce student loan defaults. It will require student loan servicers to contact the school before allowing a loan to go into default. Very often schools have more recent information on students. That information can lead to actual contact with the student, which can reduce the likelihood of the student's loan going into default.

Furthermore, this legislation will prohibit guaranty agencies from requiring schools to pay a fee for student loan information. This information can help keep loans out of default and it should be available to schools without cost.

In addition, H.R. 6 will help institutions serving at risk students by requiring the department to retain the eligibility of schools serving those populations, provided they meet specific graduation and job placement requirements.

H.R. 6 will also allow for increased accuracy in default rates by removing students who defaulted loans but have been brought into repayment from the school's default rate.

H.R. 6 will also establish parallel student repayment terms and conditions within the Federal Family Education Loan and the Federal Direct Student Loan Programs. This will provide for income-contingent repayment and loan consolidation options, which are currently

available under direct lending, but not in the FFEL Program.

Finally, H.R. 6 will make several changes that were not in my legislation but will be good for students and educators. It fixes the onerous 85/15 rule by changing the requirement that 15 percent of a school's revenue come from non-Federal Title 4 sources to ten percent. The 85/15 rule is now the 90/10 rule and that is a good reform, especially for students and schools in low-income areas.

H.R. 6 also provides for a liaison in the Department of Education for career schools. These institutions are training many of today's workers and they deserve a voice at the Department.

Lastly, H.R. 6 will require that the Department publish the rules and regulations that students and schools must follow on time. If schedules are good for the students and schools, they should be good for the Department and they should be followed.

I commend Chairman GOODLING and members of the committee for a solid piece of legislation and I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 6.

Mrs. CLAYTON. Mr. Speaker, good, quality and affordable education in post secondary institutions is a goal to which all of us should aspire.

Our goal is to provide students with the tools they may use to pursue higher education by authorizing the maximum Pell grant award of \$4,500 in 1999–2000 with increases in subsequent years; a more student friendly formula for determining the amount of student financial aid; and a two-tier interest rate structure.

In order to reach this goal, we must function as a partnership, at all levels of government and in the private sector.

This conference report to H.R. 6, the Higher Education Amendments Act of 1998, achieves this goal.

Furthermore, I recommend the conference committee for supporting a provision that I proposed in the House passed bill.

This provision increases voter registration among college students requiring colleges and universities that receive federal funding to provide voter registration forms to students.

Providing the opportunity of voter registration to students allows them to exercise one of their most fundamental rights.

I am pleased that my colleagues also value the importance of involving the most mobile group of our country in the political process.

Therefore, I urge my colleagues to support this conference report to H.R. 6.

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the Higher Education Amendments conference report. In today's world, a college diploma is the key to success. But the rising cost of college tuition puts that diploma out of reach for many American students.

The Higher Education Act will help make the dream of a college diploma a reality for more families by making more financial aid available for some of our nation's neediest citizens. Students whose families earn incomes of \$12,000 or less a year will be able to receive more financial aid through Pell Grants than ever before. The bill will also strengthen the formula which determines how much aid a student qualifies for, and allow young people to earn money and save for their education without being penalized by losing financial aid.

I am particularly pleased that this conference report contains provisions for campus-

based child care. Many people with young children, who want to attend college and build a better life for themselves and their families, find themselves unable to go to school simply because they can not find high quality and affordable child care. This important program will allow parents to attend college with the security of knowing their children are well care for.

As a member of the Labor-Health and Human Services-Education Appropriations Subcommittee, I will work to ensure that this important program gets funding for fiscal year 1999, so parents can immediately begin to take advantage of campus-based child care.

I urge my colleagues to support the Higher Education Act.

Mr. MARTINEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the conference report on H.R. 6, the Higher Education Amendments of 1998.

I would like to begin by commending Chairman GOODLING and Ranking Member CLAY, and Subcommittee Chairman MCKEON and Ranking Member KILDEE, for their bipartisan leadership and their tireless effort to increase the accessibility and quality of higher education for all Americans.

Over two years ago, Mr. MCKEON and Mr. KILDEE began the process of reauthorizing the Higher Education Act with four goals in mind: making higher education more affordable; simplifying the student aid system; promoting academic quality; and improving access to post-secondary education. The bill we have before us today goes to great lengths in achieving these goals.

This conference agreement makes higher education more affordable by expanding the Pell Grant Program and nearly doubling the maximum Pell award over the next five years. It significantly increases the authorization for the College Work-Study program and nearly doubles the allowance for child care. It modifies the need analysis formula to encourage savings and allow students and parents to keep more of their money through increased income protection. It reduces new student loan interest rates to their lowest rate in 17 years and allows students to consolidate and refinance existing loans at a lower rate. Finally, the conference agreement requires the National Center for Education Statistics to conduct a study on the rising cost of tuition.

This conference agreement simplifies the student aid process by creating a Performance Based Organization within the Department of Education to provide quality service to students and parents and to ensure that the student financial aid system is run in a professional, business-like manner. It also requires the Department to develop a single, more simple student aid application and a single, more simple promissory note.

This conference agreement promotes academic quality by increasing institutional standards and providing assistance to those institutions that do not meet those standards. It also authorizes grants to states to improve teacher training programs and directs states to use a percentage of those grants to recruit quality teachers. Finally, it encourages qualified individuals to go into the field of teaching by creating a loan forgiveness program for teachers.

This conference agreement makes post-secondary education more accessible to all Americans, particularly low-income and minority students. It increases the authorization level and scope of the TRIO programs and

creates the GEAR Up program to allow low-income students to participate in early-intervention and college awareness activities. It also increases the authorization levels for historically black colleges and universities, Hispanic serving institutions, and tribally controlled colleges. Finally, it creates grants to institutions serving a percentage of Native Alaskans and Hawaiians.

I am particularly pleased with what this bill does for Hispanics. Previously, Hispanic serving institutions were buried in title III. However, as a result of this conference agreement, HSIs will have their own title and a greatly increased authorization level. No longer will the Department be able to ignore the importance of these institutions which will only continue to grow as the Hispanic community continues to grow. As a matter of fact, the Census Bureau projects that by 2050, Hispanics will make up 25 percent of the population. It is only fitting that this reauthorization recognize the significance of these institutions which will play an even greater role in educating future generations.

For the above reasons, I strongly support this conference report and urge my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. EWING. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to rise in support of this legislation which will reauthorize the Higher Education Act of 1965. With seven institutions of higher education in my district, this bill is of great importance to my constituents.

While reauthorizing many existing programs this legislation establishes new programs which will provide low-income and disadvantaged students access to a college education. We are all aware of how important a college education is to our children who will be working in an increasingly global economy.

We must prepare our children for the world they will face and increasing the maximum Pell grant levels each school year until 2003–2004, providing low interest student loans, and expanding the work-study program are all ways to provide an affordable college education.

There are also a number of provisions included in this bill which will help to improve the recruitment and quality of the teachers we entrust with our children. It achieves this by granting states the ability to reform accountability and certification requirements for their current teachers and provides loan forgiveness for teachers who choose to go to low-income areas to teach. We must provide all students with a quality education if we expect them to succeed.

There is also an important provision which provides \$5 million for fiscal year 1999 for a new grant and award program which would encourage colleges to establish alcohol and drug abuse prevention and education programs. I believe that other institutions should follow the lead of the University of Illinois and its Alcohol 101 program to help deter the increasing use of drugs and alcohol on campus.

Along with the drug and alcohol provisions there is also an incentive to help keep our children safe by requiring administrators and institutions to submit campus crime statistics to the Secretary of the Department of Education. It is important that parents have accurate records of the amount and types of crimes taking place. There are also grants, through the Justice Department, authorized to develop and strengthen effective security and

investigation strategies, along with victim services. It is very important that our children are protected while they are on campus.

I am proud to vote for the legislation and am proud of the work this Congress has done to improve the education of the most essential people in this country—our children. Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to support this important legislation.

Mr. BARRETT of Nebraska. Mr. Speaker, today the House continues a commitment made more than 40 years ago, that if you have the ability, but not the means, you can get a college education.

I'm particularly pleased H.R. 6 will provide loan forgiveness to qualified teachers working at schools located in low-income areas. Many rural school administrators have told me they are having a difficult time attracting teachers trained in the sciences and mathematics. With these provisions, rural schools now be able to recruit such people and meet an ever growing challenge.

We've all heard from students who were denied federal student aid because they earned too much in the summer or throughout the year. Fortunately, there are provisions in the bill permitting students to earn a bit more and still qualify for student aid. Specifically, the agreement increases the income protection allowance to \$2,200, and adjusts it annually to keep pace with inflation.

Mr. Speaker, I support the conference report. And, I congratulate Chairman GOODLING and Chairman MCKEON, ranking members CLAY and KILDEE for their good work.

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Mr. Speaker, the conference report for H.R. 6 includes many provisions that I have long supported, and which are very important to my constituents on Long Island. I am especially pleased that the bill increases the authorization for the maximum Pell grant to \$5,800 by the 2003–2004 academic year. I also am pleased that we have taken action to ensure that the FFEL and Direct Loan programs can continue providing financial aid to students.

As the sponsor of the America's Teacher Preparation Improvement Act of 1997, I have worked hard to ensure that the final version of H.R. 6 makes a strong statement in support of teachers. I am delighted that the conference report includes many of the provisions of my bill, including: replacing 17 ineffective programs with a consolidated program; creating partnerships between education schools, school districts and community groups; funding grants to recruit new teachers, including minorities, veterans and people changing careers; helping teachers learn the latest technology; providing mentoring for teachers in their first years on the job; helping states recruit teachers for underserved areas; and helping the education system toughen the standards for preparing teachers. These provisions will help ensure that every classroom has a well-prepared teacher.

H.R. 6 also includes legislation that I introduced with Congressman ENGEL, H.R. 1440. Our bill ensures that students have reliable information about financial aid. While the Internet offer many legitimate scholarships, the World Wide Web also is home to scam artists who promise students financial aid—for a hefty fee—but don't deliver. H.R. 6 directs the Education Department to place information on its Web site about legitimate and fraudulent financial aid offers on the Internet.

As an original cosponsor of H.R. 3293, the Women's Higher Education Opportunity Act of 1998, I am very pleased that H.R. 6 includes several provisions to help women students, including grants to help colleges and universities establish child care centers for students with children, and grants to combat violent crime against women on campus.

Similarly, I am pleased that the bill incorporates provisions of H.R. 715, the Accuracy in Campus Crime Reporting Act, legislation I cosponsored to improve safety on campuses. H.R. 6 expands the list of crimes that schools must report to the public, and requires institutions of higher education to keep daily logs of crimes reported to police or campus security. This will go a long way towards ensuring that students can learn in a safe environment.

I was concerned that the House-passed H.R. 6 would have eliminated a separate authorization for the Jacob Javits Fellowship program for competitive grants for doctoral-level study in the arts, humanities and social sciences. I joined Congressman PAYNE to urge the conferees to maintain the Javits program. I am pleased that they did.

Finally, H.R. 6 includes a new program which will help grade school students prepare for college, and ensure they can afford it. The GEAR-UP program, based on legislation I cosponsored, H.R. 777, the 21st Century Scholars Act, lets young people know that higher education is a reality for them.

As I said, this bill contains many provisions to make college more accessible. However, I am deeply concerned that one provision will actually make college less accessible.

H.R. 6 eliminates schools from the Pell Grant Program if they are eliminated from student loan programs for having three consecutive years of cohort default rates over 25 percent. While supporters of the provision maintain it is needed to prevent fly-by-night colleges from defrauding students with Federal money, the reality is that this provision will cause many excellent schools that serve low-income populations to shut their doors.

I would like to call my colleagues' attention to a recent GAO report which evaluated several studies of default rates. According to GAO, "A key theme from these studies is that student loan repayment and default behavior are primarily influenced by individual borrower characteristics rather than by the characteristics of the educational institutions they attend."

We need to hold schools accountable. But we need to look very closely at the measurements we use to determine how well they are performing. I fear that the end result of this provision will be that many low-income students will not have access to a higher education. At a time when we are trying to move more people off welfare and into the workforce, the last thing we should do is make education unaffordable. This is a provision which I believe we will need to revisit next year.

On balance, H.R. 6 makes huge strides toward making higher education accessible and affordable. And it is faithful to the spirit of the original 1965 Higher Education Act. I urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. WELLER. Mr. Speaker, while I intend to support the conference report, I have concerns regarding Section 972. This provision would raise the Ginnie Mae Guranty fee by 3 basis points beginning in the Year 2004. Such an increase unduly burdens low and mod-

erate-income American families, and there is really no financial justification for the increase.

As you may be aware, Ginnie Mae guarantees payments to investors if private mortgage servicers are unable to make scheduled payments. Servicers are charged a guaranty fee of 6 basis points for this added protection.

I believe that increasing the Ginnie Mae guaranty fee would subject homebuyers to an unnecessary tax on homeownership. The measure would cost homebuyers hundreds of dollars at in additional expenses at closing and prohibit thousands of families from achieving the dream of homeownership.

In addition, increasing the Ginnie Mae Guaranty fee have absolutely no financial basis. Recently, the independent auditor, KPMG, confirmed that Ginnie Mae is financially sound. In act, Ginnie Mae had a record profit of \$601 million in 1997. In other words, Ginnie Mae's profit exceeded U.S. ticket sales or the movie, "Titanic." In 1997 alone, Ginnie Mae collected a total of \$326 million in guaranty fees. It paid out only \$11 million in unreimbursed claims. From these statistics, it is apparent that Ginnie Mae does not need a financial boost from the increase fee.

You should also do bear in mind that the Senate already rejected the Ginnie Mae Guaranty fee increase by a wide margin. During consideration of the fiscal year 1999 VA/HUD appropriations bill, the Senate voted to take the Nickles amendment by a margin of 69–27. The Nickles amendment would have increased the Ginnie Mae guaranty fee by 6 basis points. In light of this recent precedent, I see no reason why we should now accept this harmful provision.

I am opposed to raising the Ginnie Mae Guranty fee. I believe it is bad public policy and will harm those low and moderate income families that the Higher Education bill is trying to assist. I think it was a mistake to include this provision in the conference report, and I hope that in the future, we make greater attempt to find out.

Mr. GOODLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FOSSELLA). Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the conference report.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the conference report.

The conference report was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GOODLING. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the conference report just agreed to.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Pennsylvania?

There was no objection.

EXTENDING QUARTERLY FINANCIAL REPORT PROGRAM ADMINISTERED BY SECRETARY OF COMMERCE

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take from